

REMARKS

The Office Action dated May 16, 2008 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-16 and 18-47 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-16 and 18-47 stand rejected.

The rejection of Claims 1-13, 15-17, and 29-47 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,257,981 to Acres, et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Acres”) in view of U.S. Patent 6,769,986 to Vancura (hereinafter referred to as “Vancura”), and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,955,600 to Glavich, et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Glavich”) is respectfully traversed.

Acres describes a system (10) for monitoring and configuring gaming devices (12-16; 22-26) connected by a network. The system (10) includes a file server (32), a plurality of floor controllers (18; 28), and a plurality of pit terminals (34). The file server (32) stores gaming activity taking place on each gaming device (12-16; 22-26). Each pit terminal (34) monitors gaming device activity in an associated pit and is also used as a security monitoring device to detect unanticipated events such as fills or payouts. Each of the interconnected gaming devices (12-16; 22-26) includes an electronic module (40) that enables the gaming device (12-16; 22-26) to communicate with a floor controller (18; 28). The electronic module (40) includes a player tracking module (44) that includes a card reader (100) for detecting a player tracking card inserted by a player for identifying the player. The electronic module (40) also includes a data communication node (42) that communicates with the floor controller (18; 28). Each floor controller (18; 28) monitors an activity level of gaming devices (12-16; 22-26) connected to the floor controller (18; 28). The floor controllers (18; 28) also issue commands to associated gaming devices (12-16; 22-26) to reconfigure their payout schedules during certain bonusing events.

Notably, Acres does not describe nor suggest selecting, at a configuration workstation, at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria to define a

bonus game triggering criterion *specific to a particular player* playing the base game and triggering operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related. Rather, Acres describes a minimum activity level that must be maintained by *any player* playing a game, rather than enabling an operator to configure a bonus game to a specific player.

Vancura describes a method of enabling a player to customize a casino game. Before playing a base game, the player is offered the choice of a plurality of aspects of bonus play from which to pre-select at the gaming machine. The player may choose trigger symbols that signify entry to bonus play. Moreover, the player may choose a type of bonus game to play at the gaming machine, should the player qualify. Further, the player may choose a monetary value and/or a difficulty of the bonus game played at the gaming machine.

Glavich describes a gaming device (10) that includes a set of mechanical or video reels (34) having a plurality of symbols (58) included thereon. The gaming device (10) enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is made between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols (58) on the reels (34) and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols (58). During the bonus game, the gaming device (10) enables players to re-trigger the bonus game when the same symbols (58) that originally triggered the bonus game are again displayed on the reels (34).

Claim 1 recites a method for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, at least some of the gaming machines being of a type having a base game display area and a bonus game display area, wherein the method comprises "selecting at a configuration workstation coupled to the gaming machines over the network at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria displayed in a list to thereby define a bonus game triggering criterion related to at least one of a base game and the bonus game, wherein the selected triggering criterion is based at least partially on multiple selected outcomes of the base game and is specific to a particular player playing the base game . . . detecting the selected triggering criterion . . . triggering the operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine being played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related...."

No combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests a method for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests selecting, at a configuration workstation, at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria to define a bonus game triggering criterion specific to a particular player playing the base game and triggering operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related. Rather, Acres describes a system for monitoring and configuring gaming devices that requires a minimum activity level to be maintained by the player through playing a game a predetermined number of times, Vancura describes a gaming machine that allows a player to choose aspects of a bonus game at the gaming machine, prior to starting play of a base game, and Glavich describes a gaming device that enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is formed between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols, and, during the bonus game, enables players to re-trigger the bonus game when the same symbols that originally triggered the bonus game, are again displayed on the reels.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claims 2-13, 15, 16, 29-33, and 45 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2-13, 15, 16, 29-33, and 45 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 2-13, 15, 16, 29-33, and 45 likewise are patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claim 34 recites a method for remotely configuring a gaming machine over a network from a configuration computer, wherein the method comprises “operating a bonus configuration program on a configuration computer remote from the gaming machine, the configuration program including a rule generator comprising a plurality of selectable bonus promotion criteria that are specific to a player playing the gaming machine....”

No combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests a method for remotely configuring a gaming machine over a network from a configuration computer, as is recited in Claim 34. More specifically, no combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests operating a bonus configuration program that includes a rule generator including a plurality of selectable bonus promotion criteria that are specific to a player playing the gaming machine. Rather, Acres describes a system for monitoring and configuring gaming devices that requires a minimum activity level to be maintained by the player through playing a game a predetermined number of times, Vancura describes a gaming machine that allows a player to choose aspects of a bonus game at the gaming machine, prior to starting play of a base game, and Glavich describes a gaming device that enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is formed between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols, and, during the bonus game, enables players to re-trigger the bonus game when the same symbols that originally triggered the bonus game, are again displayed on the reels.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 34 is submitted to be patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claims 35-40 depend from independent Claim 34. When the recitations of Claims 35-40 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 34, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 35-40 likewise are patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claim 41 recites a method for configuring a gaming machine of a type coupled to a network and having a base game and a bonus game, wherein the method comprises "operating a configuration computer on a network remote from a gaming machine, the configuration computer having a configuration program operating thereon . . . selecting at the configuration computer one or more of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria presented by the configuration program and specific to a particular player playing the base game at the gaming machine...."

No combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests a method for configuring a gaming machine having a base game and a bonus game, as is recited in Claim 41. More specifically, no combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests selecting, at a configuration computer, one or more possible bonus game triggering criteria specific to a particular player playing a base game at a gaming machine. Rather, Acres describes a system for monitoring and configuring gaming devices that requires a minimum activity level to be maintained by the player through playing a game a predetermined number of times, Vancura describes a gaming machine that allows a player to choose aspects of a bonus game at the gaming machine, prior to starting play of a base game, and Glavich describes a gaming device that enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is formed between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols, and, during the bonus game, enables players to re-trigger the bonus game when the same symbols that originally triggered the bonus game, are again displayed on the reels.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 41 is submitted to be patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claim 42 depends from independent Claim 41. When the recitations of Claim 42 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 41, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 42 likewise is patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claim 43 recites a gaming machine coupled to a network and controlled by a processor and a memory in response to a wager, wherein the gaming machine comprises "a special feature indicated on a visual display, the visual display depicting a bonus event triggered responsive to a bonus rule received over a network and stored in memory, the bonus rule being generated at a configuration station coupled to the network by selecting at least one of each of: a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria, wherein the at least one selected bonus game triggering criterion is based at least partially on multiple selected outcomes of a based game played on the gaming machine and is specific to a particular player playing a base game at the gaming machine . . . a plurality of possible special features for

indication on the visual display . . . a plurality of possible items of value awarded to a winner of the bonus event.”

No combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests a gaming machine, as is recited in Claim 43. More specifically, no combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests a gaming machine that depicts a bonus event triggered responsive to a bonus rule generated at a configuration station by selecting at least one possible bonus game triggering criteria specific to a particular player playing a base game at the gaming machine. Rather, Acres describes a system for monitoring and configuring gaming devices that requires a minimum activity level to be maintained by the player through playing a game a predetermined number of times, Vancura describes a gaming machine that allows a player to choose aspects of a bonus game at the gaming machine, prior to starting play of a base game, and Glavich describes a gaming device that enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is formed between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols, and, during the bonus game, enables players to re-trigger the bonus game when the same symbols that originally triggered the bonus game, are again displayed on the reels.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 43 is submitted to be patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claim 44 depends from independent Claim 43. When the recitations of Claim 44 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 43, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 44 likewise is patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claim 46 recites an apparatus for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, at least some of the gaming machines being of a type having a base game display area and a bonus game display area, wherein the apparatus comprises “a configuration workstation coupled to the gaming machines over the network, including: a monitor for displaying a list of possible bonus game triggering criteria and a plurality of possible visual activities . . . means for

selecting at least one of the plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria to thereby define a bonus game triggering criterion related to at least one of the games, wherein the selected triggering criterion is based at least partially on multiple selected outcomes of the base game selected at the configuration workstation prior to play of the at least one game and is specific to a player playing a base game at the gaming machine . . . means for selecting at least one of the plurality of possible visual activities for presentation on the bonus game display area of the gaming machine being played by the player to which the triggering criterion is related; memory storage accessible by the network for storing the selections . . . means for triggering the operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine being played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related....”

No combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests an apparatus for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, as is recited in Claim 46. More specifically, no combination of Acres, Vancura, and Glavich describes nor suggests a configuration workstation that includes a means for selecting at least one possible bonus game triggering criteria to define a bonus game triggering criterion specific to a player playing a base game at the gaming machine. Rather, Acres describes a system for monitoring and configuring gaming devices that requires a minimum activity level to be maintained by the player through playing a game a predetermined number of times, Vancura describes a gaming machine that allows a player to choose aspects of a bonus game at the gaming machine, prior to starting play of a base game, and Glavich describes a gaming device that enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is formed between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols, and, during the bonus game, enables players to re-trigger the bonus game when the same symbols that originally triggered the bonus game, are again displayed on the reels.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 46 is submitted to be patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

Claim 47 depends from independent Claim 46. When the recitations of Claim 47 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 46, Applicants submit that dependent

Claim 47 likewise is patentable over Acres in view of Vancura, and further in view of Glavich.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 1-13, 15, 16, and 29-47 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acres in view of Vancura and Glavich, and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0176216 to Storey (hereinafter referred to as “Storey”) is respectfully traversed.

Acres, Vancura, and Glavich are each described above. Storey describes a gaming machine (100) that is operable in a basic mode to play a base game and in a bonus mode to play a bonus game. After the gaming machine (100) awards credits to a player having won a basic game, a processor (200) continues operating in the basic mode, unless the outcome of the basic game matches at least one of two bonus triggers. If the outcome matches either of the two bonus triggers, the processor (200) selects a bonus game from a set of bonus games associated with the bonus trigger having been matched to the basic game outcome.

Claim 1 recites a method for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, at least some of the gaming machines being of a type having a base game display area and a bonus game display area, wherein the method comprises “selecting at a configuration workstation coupled to the gaming machines over the network at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria displayed in a list to thereby define a bonus game triggering criterion related to at least one of a base game and the bonus game, wherein the selected triggering criterion is based at least partially on multiple selected outcomes of the base game and is specific to a particular player playing the base game . . . detecting the selected triggering criterion . . . triggering the operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine being played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related....”

No combination of Acres, Vancura, Glavich, and Storey describes nor suggests a method for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game

on at least one of the networked gaming machines, as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Acres, Vancura, Glavich, and Storey describes nor suggests selecting, at a configuration workstation, at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria to define a bonus game triggering criterion specific to a particular player playing the base game and triggering operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related. Rather, Acres describes a system for monitoring and configuring gaming devices that requires a minimum activity level to be maintained by the player through playing a game a predetermined number of times, Vancura describes a gaming machine that allows a player to choose aspects of a bonus game at the gaming machine, prior to starting play of a base game, Glavich describes a gaming device that enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is formed between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols, and, during the bonus game, enables players to re-trigger the bonus game when the same symbols that originally triggered the bonus game, are again displayed on the reels, and Storey describes a gaming machine that includes a processor that shifts the gaming machine from a base game mode to a bonus game mode when a base game outcome matches either of two bonus triggers.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Acres in view of Vancura and Glavich, and further in view of Storey.

Claim 14 depends from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claim 14 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 14 likewise is patentable over Acres in view of Vancura and Glavich, and further in view of Storey.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claim 14 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 18-25 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acres in view of Vancura and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,669,559 to Baerlocher, et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Baerlocher '559") is respectfully traversed.

Acres, Vancura, and Glavich are described above. Baerlocher '559 describes a gaming device (10) that includes a program that automatically begins a bonus round game when a player has achieved a qualifying condition in the game, such as a particular arrangement of indicia on a display window (28). Initially, the bonus round game provides the player with a plurality of image selections that the player chooses a selection. The bonus round game then displays a symbol that is either a non-terminating symbol or a terminating symbol, and awards a basic value to the player each time the player locates certain symbols, and a match value when matching symbols are located. If the player chooses a selection that is a terminating symbol, the bonus round game terminates.

Claim 1 recites a method for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, at least some of the gaming machines being of a type having a base game display area and a bonus game display area, wherein the method comprises "selecting at a configuration workstation coupled to the gaming machines over the network at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria displayed in a list to thereby define a bonus game triggering criterion related to at least one of a base game and the bonus game, wherein the selected triggering criterion is based at least partially on multiple selected outcomes of the base game and is specific to a particular player playing the base game . . . detecting the selected triggering criterion . . . triggering the operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine being played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related...."

No combination of Acres, Vancura, Glavich, and Baerlocher '559 describes nor suggests a method for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Acres, Vancura, Glavich, and Baerlocher '559 describes nor suggests selecting, at a configuration workstation, at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria to define a bonus game triggering criterion specific to a particular player playing the base game and triggering operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related. Rather, Acres describes a system for monitoring and configuring gaming devices that

requires a minimum activity level to be maintained by the player through playing a game a predetermined number of times, Vancura describes a gaming machine that allows a player to choose aspects of a bonus game at the gaming machine, prior to starting play of a base game, Glavich describes a gaming device that enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is formed between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols, and, during the bonus game, enables players to re-trigger the bonus game when the same symbols that originally triggered the bonus game, are again displayed on the reels, and Baerlocher '559 describes a bonus round game in which a player chooses a selection and the bonus round game exhibits a symbol, wherein the bonus round game awards a basic value or greater to the player each time the player locates a non-terminating symbol and terminates the bonus round game if the player locates a terminating symbol.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Acres in view of Vancura and Glavich, and further in view of Baerlocher '559.

Claims 18-25 and 28 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 18-25 and 28 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 18-25 and 28 likewise are patentable over Acres in view of Vancura and Glavich, and further in view of Baerlocher '559.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 18-25 and 28 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 26 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acres in view of Vancura and Glavich, and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,506,118 to Baerlocher, et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Baerlocher '118") is respectfully traversed.

Acres, Vancura, and Glavich are described above. Baerlocher '118 describes a gaming device (10) that includes a base game, a bonus game, and a bonus scheme that enables a player to modify an existing award offer. An initial award offer is made to the

player, and the player may then accept the initial award offer or modify the initial award offer to form a subsequent award offer. The subsequent award offer is based on the initial award offer and may be of lesser, greater, or equal value than the initial award offer.

Claim 1 recites a method for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, at least some of the gaming machines being of a type having a base game display area and a bonus game display area, wherein the method comprises "selecting at a configuration workstation coupled to the gaming machines over the network at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria displayed in a list to thereby define a bonus game triggering criterion related to at least one of a base game and the bonus game, wherein the selected triggering criterion is based at least partially on multiple selected outcomes of the base game and is specific to a particular player playing the base game . . . detecting the selected triggering criterion . . . triggering the operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine being played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related...."

No combination of Acres, Vancura, Glavich, and Baerlocher '118 describes nor suggests a method for an operator of networked gaming machines to remotely configure a bonus game on at least one of the networked gaming machines, as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Acres, Vancura, Glavich, and Baerlocher '118 describes nor suggests selecting, at a configuration workstation, at least one of a plurality of possible bonus game triggering criteria to define a bonus game triggering criterion specific to a particular player playing the base game and triggering operation of a bonus game on a gaming machine played by the player to which the detected triggering criterion is related. Rather, Acres describes a system for monitoring and configuring gaming devices that requires a minimum activity level to be maintained by the player through playing a game a predetermined number of times, Vancura describes a gaming machine that allows a player to choose aspects of a bonus game at the gaming machine, prior to starting play of a base game, Glavich describes a gaming device that enables players to trigger a bonus game when a match is formed between a randomly chosen set of displayed symbols and a randomly chosen winning combination of symbols, and, during the bonus game, enables players to re-trigger

the bonus game when the same symbols that originally triggered the bonus game, are again displayed on the reels, and Baerlocher '118 describes a gaming device that includes a base game, a bonus game, and a bonus scheme that enables a player to modify an existing award offer during the bonus game.


Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Acres in view of Vancura and Glavich, and further in view of Baerlocher '118.

Claims 26 and 27 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 26 and 27 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 26 and 27 likewise are patentable over Acres in view of Vancura and Glavich, and further in view of Baerlocher '118.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 26 and 27 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert B. Reaser, III
Registration No. 45548
ARMSTRONG TEASDALE LLP
One Metropolitan Square, Suite 2600
St. Louis, Missouri 63102-2740
(314) 621-5070